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NEWS RELEASE

March 3, 2005

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UM LIBRARY LECTURE EXAMINES FUTURE OF FINE PRESS PRINTING

MISSOULA —

In this age of e-mail and electronic information, many people have been writing the obituary of the book for years. But an upcoming lecture at The University of Montana argues this may be premature.

Printer Peter Koch will present "Lead Ain't Dead: Fine Press Printing and the Future of the Book" at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 16, at UM's Maureen and Mike Mansfield Library.

Part of the Library Lecture Series, the lecture is free and open to the public. It's sponsored by the Friends of the Mansfield Library, and refreshments will be served following the lecture.

Koch, a native Montanan who now lives in Berkeley, Calif., said there is a growing interest in fine books and the art of printing. He will discuss the history of books, how books are made and what goes into making a great book.

"Fine presses are starting up at universities all over America -- often in close collaboration between rare book departments of research libraries and English or art departments," he said. "Since the arts of the book are closely allied with arcane subjects like bibliography, fine printing and the artistic crafts of bookbinding and papermaking -- which

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have survived only in private presses since the Industrial Revolution -- what do we have to learn from these presses?"

With private rare book collectors fading, great research libraries are becoming the last repositories of the book as artifact. Koch will discuss the relationship between university libraries and the future of the book.

Koch's work will be displayed in a Missoula Art Museum exhibit titled "Nature Morte" from March 17 through April 16. Examples also can be found in Archives and Special Collections at the Mansfield Library.

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